

PE1423/H

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Committee
The Scottish Parliament
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Corporate Services Directorate

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Your Ref:
Our Ref: PV/IW

Date 28th May 2012

Dear Alison

RESPONSE TO PETITION PE1423

Thank you for your letter of 1 May seeking a response to the petition raised by Gordon Hall on behalf of The Unreasonable Learners. Fife Council is happy to provide the following information relating to the issues raised by the petitioner.

Fife Council considers that the considerable research on managing the contribution of staff already impacts on the approaches taken within the council for devolved service delivery and decision taking, and leadership and management development. Recent examples from Fife in developing these approaches include:

Area Management and Committees

Area Services Managers ensure the delivery of responsive and high quality services that meet the needs of customers and communities through:

- coordinating a wide range of Fife Council services at an area level to meet area priorities;
- developing close ties between local and Fife-wide services to ensure greater coordination of service delivery; and
- effective communication between strategic and operational elements of the Council.

In addition, these managers carry out the Lead Officer role for the Area Committees. These committees are important for engaging with local communities, devolving decision making and allowing elected members to ensure local services meet local needs and priorities.

Process Excellence

The Council has adopted a Process Excellence framework. The approach incorporates 'Lean' as the key tool for interventional improvement and for establishing a colleague-led culture of continuous improvement. For each identified process, a three-component approach is being used:

- Focused Improvement Projects Implementing an improvement project, potentially including a Lean event, to drive a step-change in the performance of the process.

- Team-level Continuous Improvement Once a process is improved, the team operating the process is empowered and provided with the capability to continue improving the process (continuous improvement culture) through embedding the Lean work-system.
- Strategic Ownership and Control In tandem with the team training, the improved process is controlled and ongoing change managed through appointing a Process Owner who leads a governance forum consisting of representatives of all functions within the end-to-end process.

Leadership and Management Development

The council has recently agreed a revised leadership and management development framework. The Framework is built around best practice and includes access to the following development opportunities:

- Mentoring
- Defined skills programme
- Cross organisational / partner project placements
- CMI or equivalent approved management qualifications
- Opportunities for self-assessment & feedback
- Access to self-directed learning resources
- Development Centres
- External collaborative working
- External development programmes

In addition, the framework will continue investment in core and key skills and introduce a formal Council wide talent management approach.

Collaborative Leadership

The Fife Partnership launched Fife's first Post Graduate Certificate in Collaborative Leadership in March 2011, providing a unique and challenging approach to leadership development across public sector bodies in Fife. Collaboration has been the focus of every aspect of the course. Participants attend as members of collaborative teams rather than as individuals, with their team projects being integrated into the learning process. Successful completion will gain participants 60 credit points at Masters Level from the University of St Andrews School of Management.

The results being achieved by course participants are second to none and provide striking evidence of their commitment to this programme. The course has been conceived, designed and delivered through a collaboration between St Andrews University, NHS Fife and Fife Council. The initial programme will provide valuable feedback for the future development of the course and its role in improving the practice of collaboration and collaborative leadership in Fife.

I hope these examples prove informative on how recent management research and good practice is being incorporated into the day to day operations of the council.

Yours sincerely

Paul Vaughan
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